

Minutes
Board Meeting
Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges
Wednesday, September 25, 2013

Board Members Present: Jay Bushnell, John McPherson, Carmelo Echeveria, Bob Hudson, Peg Hall, Russ Hall, Richard Herman, Greg Lang.

Staff: Pam Darty

1. The meeting was convened at 10:08 a.m. by Jay Bushnell, Chair.
2. Minutes from the August 23, 2013 meeting.

Motion to accept: Peg Hall. **Second:** Bob Hudson. Passed by unanimous vote.

Jay Bushnell made the suggestion that the word “volunteer” not be used in publicity about the recognition dinner.

3. Treasurer’s report. (Attached)

Motion to accept: Richard Herman. **Second:** Bob Hudson. Passed by unanimous vote.

Discussion ensued about the possibility of a CD with Drummond Bank. It was reported that the agreement that if Friends needed to take money out it could do so without penalty would just be a verbal agreement. It was agreed that since there would not be much interest anyway, about \$50, it was probably not worth moving money to a CD. Bob Hudson agreed to call SunTrust about other options.

4. Nominating Committee
 - a. Bylaws require Board approval, and that one member be a non-Board member. Proposed members - Jay, Bob, Peg, Paul Dietrich. **Motion** to approve: Russ Hall. **Second:** Richard Herman. Passed by a unanimous vote.
 - b. **Motion** by Bob Hudson to appoint Maria Sgambati to fill the remainder of Mark Gluckman’s term. **Second** by Carmelo Echeverria. Passed by a unanimous vote.
5. Proposed date for next meeting
 - a. Discussion about meeting date that would help with Jennifer Seavey being able to attend. By consensus the date was set for October 30th.
 - b. Jane Connors would like to host a meeting in Suwannee, possibly in November. Richard Herman and Jane will propose some dates at the next meeting.

Discussion and Decision Items

1. Refuge Update

Pam Darty reported that the entrance road is to be paved in November; that a new boardwalk at Atsena Otie to help with erosion; that the Refuge is getting a lot of good publicity for its work; that all money in the exotics grant was spent, with all exotics equipment stored in the shed; and that she is working on the education grant which the Refuge did get to keep.

2. Hidden Coast Paddling Festival.

Peg Hall reported that Friends pins, free maps, brochures were provided for the HCPF handout to participants and volunteers. She also offered a new draft brochure for the Board to review. By consensus the Board approved the new brochure to include in the HCPF volunteer handouts.

3. Communications.

Peg Hall reported:

- a. She would like to order 1000 of the new Friends brochure and 100 tear-sheet panels. There was no objection to this order.
- b. Distribution of Paddling Panels: Richard Herman will take some to Suwannee.
- c. The paddling website had been completely redesigned. The site was reviewed, with emphasis on how clear the paddle sheet pdfs now are. The Board complemented Peg on how nice the new site looks and works.
- d. The Friends website has been updated. New items were noted: Minutes, updated events, end-of-year financials, join Friends button, sign up for News Brief button, read latest News Brief button, current list of members and board, Seahorse Key Field Trip.
- e. News Brief, Facebook and Website report presented. (Attached)

4. Inventory Committee tee shirt discussion.

Peg Hall reported that Andrew Gude suggested a one-off T-Shirt for the Seafood Festival, and described Andrew's idea. Sketch was provided and there was discussion. It was decided that we would wait for Andrew to present his ideas at the next meeting.

5. Seafood Festival.

Bob Hudson reported that he is looking for volunteers, especially for Saturday afternoon, and will check on whether the materials may be stored overnight in John Thalacker's condo. Jay Bushnell volunteered to take down the display and bring it all back to the Refuge.

6. Seahorse Key Field Trip.

Peg Hall reported that not many are signing up and that there are still spaces.

7. BioBlitz on North Key.

It was reported that Jennifer Seavey has tentatively set the dates as February, 1 and 2, 2014, and would like Friends participation. The goal will be to identify all species for the location. North Key is interesting because its biology is practically unknown. Many volunteers, and some boats, will be needed. Volunteers should sign up through the Friends News Brief.

8. Budget and Initiatives Committee

Peg Hall noted that it is the Friends policy that the President will appoint a Budget Committee of three board members to prepare an annual draft budget for review and approval by the Board of Directors. The budget for the coming fiscal year (calendar year) will be presented to the Board at its last meeting of the current year. There was discussion about the timing and purpose of the committee coming up with a budget. President Bushnell appointed Bob Hudson, Richard Herman, Russ Hall, and Greg Lang.

9. Initiatives.

Jay Bushnell reported that he had taken additional artists out within the Refuge. Bob Hudson provided an update. (Attached)

10. Old Business

It was reported that the Refuge had purchased a PA system with grant money.

Jay Bushnell requested items for the Ibis, which he wants to have ready before Seafood Festival. Peg Hall said she will send News Briefs for possible use.

11. New Business

Carmelo Echeverria asked about putting a sticker regarding the Friends website, etc. on Refuge printed materials. Pam Darty said she would look into this.

Adjourned: 11:37 a.m.

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs
Treasurer's Report
For the Period January 1 thru September 22, 2013

	Year to date
Cash Receipts	
Memberships	3667.86
Donations	2,745.00
Sales (includes \$75 in paddling panels)	473.00
Total cash receipts	6,885.86
Cash Disbursements	
support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs	
Annual meeting	677.98
Communications	581.18
Butterfly garden plants	32.00
Festival fees	25.00
River walk signs	51.73
Friends of the Cedar Key Library	100.00
sub-total	1,467.89
support refuge-initiated activities	
Barnett Trail Guides	18.00
Luncheon for volunteers	141.88
Interagency Cooperators Meeting	263.84
sub-total	423.72
support National Wildlife Refuge System	
NWR Association Membership	150.00
sub-total	150.00
administrative & fundraising support	
Purchase inventory	142.66
Florida Department of Revenue	71.83
Florida Department of State	61.25
sub-total	275.74
Total cash disbursements	2,317.35
Excess of receipts over disbursements	4,568.51
Cash Balance 12/31/2012	14,731.09
Cash Balance 9/22/2013	19,299.60

The cash balance consists of two components

Operating fund	8,565.31
Long term reserve	10,734.29
Total	19,299.60
Note: Long term reserve at 12/31/2012	8,734.29
Budget committee recommended transfer	2,000.00
Long term reserve at 9/22/2013	10,734.29

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Key NWRs
Actual Versus Budget
Through September 22, 2013

	actual thru 9/22	Annual Budget
Cash Receipts		
Memberships	3,667.86	2,500.00
Donations	2,745.00	2,500.00
Sales	473.00	1,000.00
Total cash receipts	<u>6,885.86</u>	<u>6,000.00</u>

Cash Disbursements	Actual thru 9/22	Annual Budget
support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs		
Annual meeting (food, supplies, honorarium)	677.98	500.00
Communications	581.18	800.00
Great Suwannee River Cleanup		150.00
Butterfly garden	32.00	50.00
Festival fees	25.00	100.00
Other (River Walk Signs)	51.73	300.00
Friends of the Cedar Key Library	100.00	
2013 Initiatives		
Art		250.00
Dixie County Friends		250.00
Education		100.00
Paddling Project		1,500.00
FL Big Bend Science Symposium		500.00
Sub-total	<u>1,467.89</u>	<u>4,500.00</u>
support refuge-initiated activities		
Interagency Cooperators Meeting	263.84	500.00
Refuge summer program (2013)		250.00
Luncheon for volunteers	141.88	
2013 Initiatives		
Dixie County Refuge expansion		50.00
Nature Coast Conservancy		250.00
Inventories/survey Refuge Biodata		50.00
Shell Mound Enhancements		750.00
River Trail Accesibility		100.00
Refuge Restoration Projects		
Refuge Trail Guides (Barnett guides)	18.00	200.00
Vista Property Conservation Planning		1,000.00
sub-total	<u>423.72</u>	<u>3,150.00</u>
support national wildlife system		
NWR Association Membership	150.00	150.00
sub-total	<u>150.00</u>	<u>150.00</u>
administrative & fundraising support		
Purchase of inventory	142.66	
Florida Department of Revenue	71.83	100.00
Florida Department of State	61.25	100.00

sub-total	<u>275.74</u>	200.00
Total cash disbursements	<u>2,317.35</u>	<u>8,000.00</u>

Communications Report September 2013 by Peg Hall

New Friends Brochure designed and bid

News Brief

September 13

Members-First Seahorse Key Field Trip, Seafood Festival, Open House, Hidden Coast Paddling Festival, Board Mtg, Int'l Coastal Cleanup, Advocacy

- **This News Brief went to 409 people (153 of whom are current members)**
- **44% opened the email (including 91 of the current members)**

Facebook

2 new fans since last report = 172

3 new posts since the last report

- **95 people saw the Hidden Coast Paddling Festival post**
- **31 people saw the News Brief post**
- **128 people saw the Atsena Otie Cemetery Cleanup call for volunteers post**

Friends Website

- **Pageviews in August = 1,541**
- **Pageviews in July = 1,384**
-

Paddling Website

- **Pageviews in August = 284 (still the old site design)**
- **Pageviews in July = 209**

Friends of the Refuges – 2013 Initiatives Update – September 24, 2013

Initiative & Champions(Friends/Refuge)	Status – <i>September 2013 reports shown in yellow</i>
Art - Ann Kamzelski, Ed, Mark/Pam, Andrew	<p><i>The purpose is to showcase the diversity and beauty of the Refuges. 18 individuals have been invited to prepare artistic representations of the Refuges in any media, which will be exhibited at the CK Arts Center next March.</i></p> <p><i>Jay reports he has taken five people into the Refuge behind the gates.</i></p>
Dixie County Enhancements- Jane, Linda Headley, Leroy Harmon /Pam, Larry	<p><i>Linda Headley reports the Master Gardeners will have tables at farmers markets in Old Town and Cross City this fall where they will distribute info about the Refuge. A series of monthly events is being planned for Suwannee in the fall.</i></p> <p><i>Jane reported that a site for a kiosk in Suwannee has been identified, and that the State has indicated it will maintain the area around the kiosk. The town of Suwannee has committed to paying for the materials. Jane stated that she is looking at alternative sources for kiosks.</i></p> <p><i>Sep 24, Andrew reports that activities included trail development, cleanups, road improvements, and planning of Dixie County activities.</i></p>
Dixie County Refuge Expansion- Greg, Jane, Carol West/Andrew	<p><i>Andrew reports that a plan has been prepared and submitted to create a Big Bend Conservation Area, for sustainable economic purposes. The plan is being considered at higher HQ and included expansion of the Refuge. While not a Friends group initiative, it is consistent with, and supportive of, this Friends initiative. Andrew reports he is working with various Federal agencies and universities, and has applied for a \$1 million grant for planning work.</i></p> <p><i>Sep 24, Andrew reports staff is working with willing landowners and other partners to explore ways in which to engage conservation easements that benefit FWS trust species and ecosystem components.</i></p>
Education Enhancements- Donna B./Pam, Kenny (CK)	<p><i>A November sleepover for 10 people at CK Lighthouse is being planned.</i></p> <p><i>Working with Pam to correlate lesson plans with State Science Standards then meet with school Principals to discuss what the Refuges have to offer students.</i></p> <p><i>2013-2013 Family activities on Refuges include bike ride, kayak trip, photo hike. Open to additional suggestions.</i></p> <p><i>The Seahorse Key event will be Nov 13/14. Ten day trippers will be included in addition to the 10 overnights. On site lectures, educational activities and logistics are in final planning stages. At the August 23 board meeting the Friends group board approved the following principles for selecting participants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• The organizers of the event will participate, namely Jennifer Seavey and Donna Bushnell</i> <i>• The president of the Friends group, or his designee, will participate to represent the Friends group</i> <i>• The remaining slots will be offered to all members of the Friends group, and each applicant shall have an equal chance to participate. The Education Committee is authorized to determine the methodology for selecting participants if there are more applicants than slots, so long as every member has an equal</i>

	<i>chance of being selected to participate.</i>
Nature Coast Conservancy Cedar Key Marshes- Jerry, John M./Andrew	<i>John and Andrew reported that dialogue is underway regarding a management agreement between the Nature Coast Conservancy and the Refuges.</i>
Paddling Project- Mark, Jane/Andrew, Larry	<p><i>Jennifer reports that SKML is available for field trips for the paddling festival.</i></p> <p><i>At the August 23 board meeting, it was agreed to authorize the Paddling Committee to prepare and distribute “tear off” sheets of paddling trails and one plasticized sheet to interested agencies, such as paddling clubs, chambers of commerce, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Peg has updated the paddling website, with downloadable .pdf files of paddling trails. She has obtained bids for printing tear off pads of paddling trails. These will be discussed at September 25 board meeting.</i></p> <p><i>Sep 24, Andrew reports the Refuge is supporting the Nature Coast Paddling Festival in Cedar Key through planning, logistics, and staff.</i></p>
Refuge Restoration- Roger/Daniel, Kenny	<p><i>Andrew reported on July 8 that the grant for invasive species eradication has now been funded in the amount of \$9,850. He is in contact with Roger and others about it.</i></p> <p><i>Roger reported that grant funds have been received. \$9,250 has been spent on equipment and supplies. Volunteer training begins in November, and spraying of Lukens tract shortly thereafter.</i></p>
River Trail Enhancements- John T./Kenny	<p><i>John reports from Pam: Laminated sheets about the trail are now available at the Refuge office. A volunteer will make a sign for the trail head in the fall.</i></p> <p><i>Sep 24, Andrew reports his goal is to improve the River Trail so it is ADA compliant/rebuild existing board walks.</i></p>
Science-Florida’s Big Bend Science Symposia- Russ/Andrew	<i>Andrew reported there is a possibility of a fall meeting focusing on the watershed.</i>
Science-Refuge Biota- Russ, Jennifer/Larry, Daniel, Vic	<p><i>Jennifer reports:</i></p> <p><i>Working on funding for a citizen science program in partnership with the Refuge. Planning to offer FL Master Nat Programs at SKML- not qualifying programs but extra field trips. Friends Group trip to SKML being planned. Planning to do a BioBlitz of the SKML in the winter which will need volunteers.</i></p> <p><i>Jennifer reported the following on Sep 17: “I am working on an invitation for Friends members so please stay tuned for that. I will have Bioblitz data on the SKML website soon- but I DO have species list for Seahorse from the past up there now- to give an idea what can be found and where data will be stored for the general public and refuge use. http://skml.clas.ufl.edu/natural-human-history/species-list/. We will have a new spot on the website for each island. As far as I</i></p>

	<p>know, this will be the first official survey of North Key. Note: this was confirmed by Pam Darty</p> <p>Russ reported that “We may be able to attract some members who we don't see very often--those who aren't particularly interested in our normal fare of attending meetings, staffing information booths, or participating in organized outdoor recreation.”</p> <p>Jennifer provided further detail on Sep 24:</p> <p>What: SKML BioBlitz 2014 is a weekend event in which teams of volunteer scientists and community members work together to find and identify as many species of plants, animals, and other organisms as possible. We will have photographers available to document species and the event.</p> <p>Goals Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discover, count, map, and learn about the living creatures on North Key. • Provide scientists and the public an opportunity to do fieldwork together. • Add to the NWR official species list. • Highlight the importance of protecting the biodiversity of these extraordinary places and beyond. <p>Where:</p> <p>North Key: One of the largest islands with in the Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge. This island is designated as a Wilderness Area and thus, access to the island's interior is closed. We have been granted access to conduct this bioblitz. Biological information on North Key is sorely lacking and all information gathered will be shared with the National Wildlife Refuge for their management purposes. For more information on this special place, see:http://www.fws.gov/cedarkeys/</p> <p>When:</p> <p>Feb 1 & 2. Arrive sat at 6am or Sat at noon (optional Friday night arrival) Leave Sunday at noon or 5pm Accommodations: Seahorse Key Marine Laboratory on Seahorse Key Meals: TBD Transportation to SKML and North Key provided by SKML</p>
<p>Shell Mound Visitor Enhancements-Ron Black, Ken Sassaman/Larry, Pam, Andrew</p>	<p>Sep 24, Andrew reports his goal is to improve access/interpretation at this prime NWR archaeological site. Secure approval and clear village site of vegetation; develop information for kiosk working</p>

	<i>with Dr. Sassaman</i>
Trail Guides Initiative -Donna T./Pam, Andrew	
Vista Property Conservation Planning - Kirby/Andrew	